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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 48
By Jackson

A RESOLUTION urging the U.S. Congress to provide a
prescription drug benefit program within
Medicare.

WHEREAS, the number of Americans with health insurance covering prescription drugs is declining by a million people per year; this is not just a problem, but an epidemic, because many Americans, especially senior adults on fixed incomes, are forced to risk their health by sharing drugs, skipping doses, or doing without medicine altogether because it is simply too expensive; and

WHEREAS, one in every four Americans do not have insurance to cover prescription drugs, and one-third of all prescription drugs are consumed by uninsured senior adults; and

WHEREAS, Medicare does not currently cover outpatient prescriptions. Older Americans desperately need these medications, however, Senior citizens are not the only persons affected by this lack of prescription drug coverage as there are more than ten million children on Medicare; and

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WHEREAS, uninsured families are charged more for prescriptions than their insured neighbors, even in the same pharmacy; similarly, uninsured Americans pay thirty to seventy percent more than Canadians and Mexicans pay for identical prescriptions; and

WHEREAS, uninsured Americans are unable to negotiate for better prices by themselves; and

WHEREAS, those Americans primarily insured by Medicare are having to pay for these high-priced prescription drugs out-of-pocket, and too many Medicare-covered Americans must make a choice between having money to purchase their prescription drug medications or having money to buy food in which to eat; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we hereby urge the U.S. Congress to remedy the serious inequity that exists for those Americans who are covered by Medicare but do not have any type of prescription drug benefit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the U.S. Congress is hereby urged to develop and quickly pass a suitable prescription drug benefit plan within the Medicare program.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk of the Senate is directed to transmit enrolled copies of this resolution to each member of the Tennessee Congressional Delegation, to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United States, to the Speaker and the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives, and to the President and the Secretary of the U.S. Senate.